

## Mayor wants state to take over care homes

Holyoke Mayor Alex Morse this week called for the state to take over operation of long-term care facilities in Holyoke during the coronavirus pandemic.

“Recently released state data on positive cases in long term care facilities is alarming, but to the best of our local knowledge, it is an undercounting of the true nature of the spread of this virus in these facilities,” the mayor said in a statement.

He said the Holyoke Board of Health has been speaking with local long-term care facilities weekly, and recently, daily, regard-

CARE, 2



## Boys & Girls Club hosts bingo online next week

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Holyoke is taking signups for a Virtual Family Bingo Night to be held next Friday.

Patrick Berry, of Mass Appeal, will host this Facebook Live event at 6:30 Friday, May 1. Bingo board cards are available for a suggested donation of \$10 or more until 1 p.m. on Thursday, April 30. Cards will be emailed to players at 1 p.m. on May 1. The same card will be used

BINGO, 2

## Share your staying at home stories, photos

The Holyoke Sun wants to know how you’re coping with the coronavirus closures and how they’ve changed all of our lives — no school, no work, social distancing and staying at home.

We can’t meet our neighbors in the schoolyards, playing fields or workplaces of Holyoke, but we can all share a few snapshots of what life’s like

SHARE, 2

# Campuses stay closed until summer

Gov. orders schools to remain shut; remote sessions end June 19

By Peter Spotts  
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A strange year will be stranger as students will be finishing the remainder of the 2019-20 school year at home with remote classes concluding on June 19.

Following Gov. Charlie Baker’s announcement on Tuesday that Massachusetts schools cannot reopen before the end of June, Holyoke Receiver-Superintendent Stephen Zrike said the district is following state guidelines to design a modified grading system that will allow students to be evaluated for their work during remote learning sessions, but is also flexible enough to accommodate the difficulties families are going through.

“While we won’t have final exams, we are putting together a plan for students to receive credit or no credit,” Zrike said. “If they receive no credit for the work, they have to make up the work into the summer or into fall, or they’d be in danger of losing credit towards graduation.”

“I think we’re trying to



Holyoke High School’s Beech Street campus — like all other Massachusetts schools — won’t reopen for students before the end of this school year. Photo by Michael Ballway

create some accountability for kids,” he added. “The challenge is, on the state level, there’s an equity issue because of access for kids and the ability to engage them, but it’s trying to find that balance — what can we reasonably expect and hold kids accountable for so their learning isn’t interrupted?”

The end of the school year also traditionally brings many important events, including

graduation, award ceremonies, recognition of teachers, parents, and students. Zrike said the district is working on plans to create alternatives for many of these events, but the graduation ceremony will be delayed until it can be held in person. He said students deserve a chance to walk across a stage and receive their diploma.

“We really do feel like there should be an in-person

graduation. Virtual sounds nice, but it doesn’t do justice to how momentous the occasion is,” Zrike said. “We’re planning on summer, as late as we can. ... If for whatever reason that can’t happen ... we’re talking tentatively about doing something over the Thanksgiving break.”

Prior to the school doors

See SCHOOL, page 5



Memorial messages and flags decorate the entrance of the Holyoke Soldiers’ Home, where dozens of veterans have died from Covid-19. Photo by Michael Ballway

## Critics: Soldiers’ Home deaths preventable

Could staffing, funding changes in recent years have prevented outbreak?

By Dalton Zbierski  
dzbierski@turley.com

The halls of the Soldiers’ Home on Cherry Street have served as the final battleground for more than 60

veterans who resided in the building and lost their lives there over the past 40 days.

The impact of Covid-19 at the Soldiers’ Home has made national news, as the outbreak continues to overwhelm the facility. As of April 22, 94 living residents and 81 employees are fighting the novel coronavirus.

This tragedy was avoidable, said several individuals close to the situation. Veterans

organizations had reportedly been requesting more funding and additional staffing since long before the outbreak.

“When this happened, they couldn’t have been prepared for it. There were too many men sharing the same bathrooms; too many men in the same room. They didn’t have enough staff, and when staff got sick and couldn’t

See SOLDIERS, page 5

## Video contest brings city together

By Shelby Macri  
smacri@turley.com

Though public health orders may have kept many Holyoke residents at home, Mayor Alex Morse made sure this month that they still had a chance to share their creativity and community spirit with others.

Morse issued the Holyoke at Home video challenge, inviting city residents to send in videos of how they’re staying busy at home during this shutdown. The videos had to be 30 seconds or less. They were due April 10, and that weekend, three winners were chosen to receive a \$100 gift card to an eligible Holyoke business of their choice — a Mayor’s Choice, Council’s Choice picked by Councilor James Leahy, and People’s Choice, determined by public votes on the contest website.

“We thought this video

See VIDEO, page 6



Counting turtles



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Last week's turtle totals

Did you find Turley the Turtle in last week's edition of The Holyoke Sun? Turley appeared 11 times. Ed Trudeau found all 11. Be sure to look closely on every page of this week's paper! We'd like to recognize our most eagle-eyed readers — if you think you've found them all, email the number you counted, along with your name and town of residence, by noon Tuesday to thesun@turley.com.

Arrest made in musician's 2018 homicide

After a year and a half, police have arrested a suspect in a 2018 fatal shooting on Maple Street in Holyoke. Last Thursday, April 16, detectives from the Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit assigned to Hampden District Attorney Anthony Gulluni's office, and the Holyoke Police Department, sought criminal charges against Derrick Brooks, 23, of Springfield. On Aug. 26, 2018, at 1:22 a.m., the Holyoke Police Department responded to a fatal shooting at 256 Maple St. The victim was later identified as Mark Diaz, 19, of Holyoke. State Police and Holyoke detectives immediately responded to the scene and opened a homicide investigation. The investigation revealed that the shooting happened at a party where local musicians were performing, including Mark Diaz. He walked out to Maple Street, where he was apparently shot, and then retreated back inside before collapsing. Gulluni stated, "Investigators never lost sight of justice for Mr. Diaz and his family, and continued to press forward for nearly two years. I would like to thank the members of the Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit in my office and those from the Holyoke Police Department for their relentless



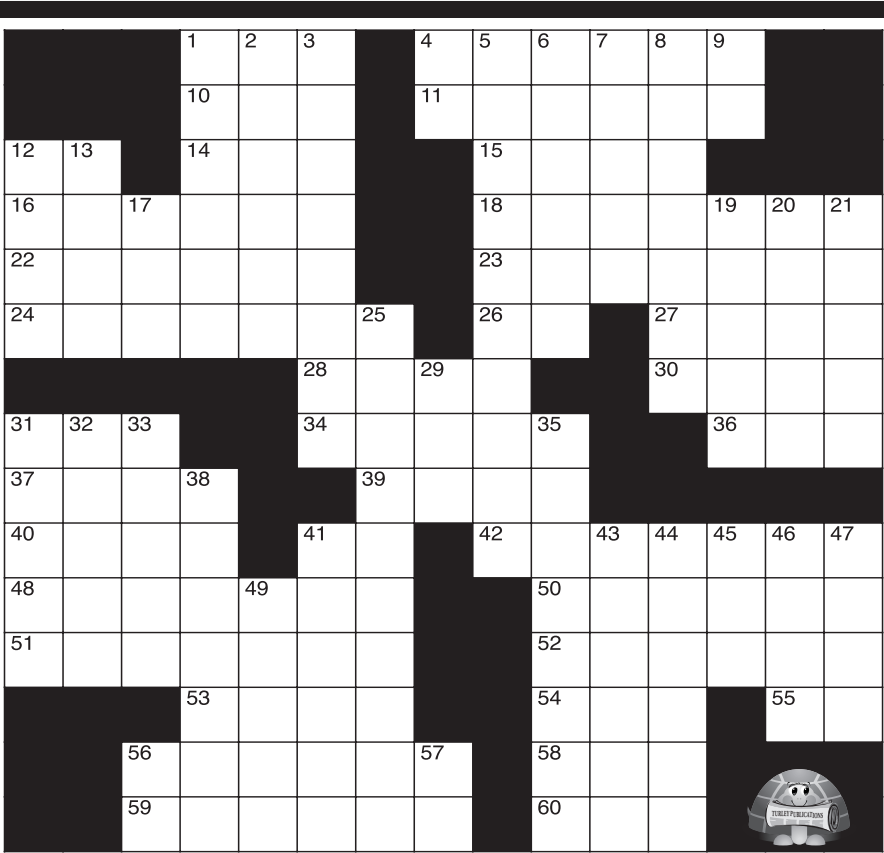
Derrick Brooks

Spelling bee will be held online next week

Coronavirus can't stop the spelling bee. This year, Homework House's fifth annual adult spelling competition will be the "Bee at Home," and starts Monday, online. Two competitions will take place April 27-30, with a daily video spelling challenge on the Homework House Holyoke page on Facebook.com. On Thursday, Homework House will present a live spelling bee online. Prizes will be awarded for both events. More details can be found at HomeworkHouseBee.com. In a statement ,Homework House said it hopes these events will provide both children and adults "an opportu-

nity for some good-humored fun from home while everyone is ... spellbound." This annual event is one of the major fundraisers for the organization which has been providing academic tutoring and mentoring for over 12 years to Holyoke school-age children, free of charge. Peoples Bank is the Bee's Knees Sponsor of the event. Pennyfarthing Investment Management, Health New England, and Holyoke Gas & Electric are Bee-Keepers Sponsors. To find more information about the events, register for the live event, or to make a donation, visit HomeWorkHouseBee.com, email

Suzanne Boniface at sboniface@homeworkhouseholyoke.org, or call her at 413-265-1017. Homework House serves children, ages 6-12, from the Holyoke public schools. Since its beginning, it has offered free tutoring and mentoring. Today, it offers services from three different locations in Holyoke. Tutors, many who are volunteers from local colleges and the community, provide individualized instruction to strengthen children's educational learning and retention. During the Covid-19 pandemic, tutoring is continuing virtually. For more information, visit HomeWorkHouseHolyoke.org.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Revolutions per minute  
4. Hymns  
10. Brew  
11. Did not acknowledge  
12. Atomic #77  
14. Partly digested food  
15. Not one  
16. Lesotho capital  
18. Copyreading  
22. Living organism that feeds on organic matter  
23. One's biological father  
24. An aggregate of molecules  
26. Equally  
27. Khoikhoi people  
28. Jump in figure

- skating  
30. Lantern  
31. TV network  
34. Georges \_\_\_, French philosopher  
36. Sharp, shrill bark  
37. Albanian monetary units  
39. Launched Apollo  
40. One who graduated  
41. Exist  
42. Passed by  
48. Very unpleasant smell  
50. Graduates  
51. Seedless raisin  
52. Self-protection  
53. Clue  
54. Life-savers  
55. Ingest too much  
56. Misrepresented  
58. Small Eurasian deer

59. Most mocking  
60. Soviet Socialist Republic  
CLUES DOWN  
1. Flower cluster  
2. A form  
3. Inner organ regions  
4. Local law enforcement  
5. A citizen of Senegal  
6. Positively charged electrodes  
7. Connects granules  
8. Business practice  
9. The Mount Rushmore State  
12. Leader  
13. Hindu queen  
17. Proofreading mark  
19. European country  
20. Greek mythological

- nymph  
21. Grandfather  
25. Clears  
29. Amount of time  
31. Mollusks  
32. German municipality  
33. Body part  
35. City of Angels  
38. Suffocate  
41. Pleasing to the eye  
43. Poplar trees (Spanish)  
44. Ship officer  
45. Individual investment account (abbr.)  
46. Prefix meaning within  
47. Ceased to live  
49. Day by day  
56. Not color  
57. Condition of withdrawal (abbr.)

CARE, from page 1

ing their ability to combat the virus. Morse said these discussions have led both him and his emergency response team to support an "immediate state intervention," including direct operational control, at any long-term care facilities with positive Covid-19 cases. "We believe the situation has become too dire to continue with status quo operations," he said. "These facilities, regardless of ownership structure, have proven unprepared to deal with the veracity of this pandemic. Some administrators have suggested to the city and state that they have things under control, while others have become more vocal in their calls for assistance. We find it unlikely that this is a situation unique to Holyoke as caseloads at long-term care facilities across the commonwealth have grown exponentially." He said many of these homes are governed by boards and executives far

removed from the crisis. Morse said his proposal is in line with calls "from the frontline workers who are treating and caring for these patients." "Rather than place blame, or trust the word of facility administrators, what we need most is urgent intervention to save lives," he continued. "The Department of Public Health and National Guard have thus far provided support for testing and PPE procurement, but it is abundantly clear that more support is needed." He said that support would include maintaining adequate staffing levels, implementing proper usage policies for personal protective equipment, and enforcing proper isolation and quarantine for healthy and sick residents. "While these measures may come off as excessive, we don't need to imagine what the alternative is," Morse said. "We are seeing it every day in growing case counts and obituaries. These people are not just statistics. We cannot ignore their names, faces, and families."

BINGO, from page 1

for all games that evening. To register, visit www.hbgc.org/index.php/en/news-events/family-bingo. Families and supporters of all ages can take a chance to win local business gift certificates of their choice while sup-

porting the essential services that the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Holyoke provides to youth who need them the most. All funds raised will support the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Holyoke as it responds to the many challenges Holyoke's youth face as a result of Covid-19.

SHARE, from page 1

with the kids in the house and the home office working overtime. Take a minute to send in an update on how you're doing, what fun enrichment activities the kids have been up to, or anything else that's made the past two weeks a special time in your home. Include full names of the writer or photographer, and anyone visible in each photo. We'll print the best entries in next week's newspaper, and in subsequent weeks as the state of emergency continues.

The best way to contact us is at thesun@turley.com. We would also be glad to publish Holyoke children's artwork, essays or photos created during the school closure. Include the creator's full name, age, and school attended. For all submissions, also include a telephone number and email address. We won't publish this information, but may use it to verify identities or ask follow-up questions. Stay safe out there — and let us know how you're doing!



# Coronavirus disrupts Senate campaigns

By Michael Ballway  
mballway@turley.com

With large gatherings banned and everyone asked to stay home, voters in Holyoke aren't just worried about whether it's safe to vote in the state Senate special election on May 19.

They're also missing the personal connection with the two candidates, who have been forced by social distancing rules to forego such usual campaign staples as ringing doorbells up and down each street, and buttonholing shoppers outside supermarkets.

"Door-knocking was 90 percent of what I was doing," said candidate John Cain, R-Southwick. "I don't think there's any substitute for being able to put yourself in front of somebody."

"All door-to-door, done. Meet-and-greets, done," said candidate John Velis, D-Westfield. "Any contact we have with anybody is over the phone."

The two nominees are running for the open Senate seat formerly held by Republican Donald Humason Jr., who resigned in January after being elected mayor of Westfield. The Senate seat is the only race on this ballot. The election was supposed to be held in March, but was delayed amid coronavirus concerns.

Now it's only a month away, but the candidates are finding it difficult to remind voters that there's an election coming up, and to make a case for them to win their vote.

"It's a relatively local race," said Cain. "People want to see you going out there and putting your boots on the ground."

Unable to campaign in person, Cain and his volunteers have hit the telephones aggressively, making 1,000 calls a day. He's also holding weekly online "town hall" meetings on Wednesdays at 5 p.m. Links to these live-streamed events can be found at his campaign page — search "John Cain for State Senate" — on Facebook.com.

Cain also set up a nomination papers signature table 8 a.m.



Senate candidate John Cain delivers lunch to first responders at Baystate Noble Hospital in Westfield. Submitted photos



John Cain stands with the table he has set up for nomination paper signatures outside his business at 69 Franklin St., Feeding Hills.

to 4 p.m. weekdays at his business at 69 Franklin St., Feeding Hills. Although both he and Velis have already qualified for next month's ballot, the seat will be up for re-election in November, and candidates have until May 5 to collect enough signatures to make it on the ballot for that election.

Velis said he's put the Senate race almost entirely out of mind as his focus shifts to his current job as Westfield's elected state representative.

"My priority is not a campaign, right now," Velis said. "My job right now is to lead the people of Westfield through this public health crisis."

He added that with the Senate seat vacant, people in the district are reaching out more to their state representatives, or state representatives from neighboring districts. He said he's been able to relay district residents' concerns to both the House and Senate leadership.

"Over the past few weeks, my office has been flooded with calls, emails, texts, Facebook messages and more," Velis said. "They are worried, anxiety-ridden, and need help. My experience over the past six years helps

me get those who need my help in contact with the proper outlet immediately. ... People need leaders and go-getters in times like this, and getting them what they need is my obligation to them."

Although he isn't calling voters personally, Velis said his campaign has continued to prepare mailers and solicit nomination signatures in the past couple weeks.

"I am blessed with a team of volunteers that have set up little signing sessions at their houses," Velis said. "I am blessed with a campaign that has been able to reach out to a network of people."

Both candidates are veterans. Velis is still in uniform, as a major in the Army Reserves, and was called up for a couple days this month to work on coronavirus response at Fort Devens in Central Massachusetts — another role that has kept him off the campaign trail.

Cain was recently discharged honorably as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Reserves, and also worked as a civilian ship's engineer before starting a heavy equipment and construction business in Feeding



Senate candidate John Velis helps the Westfield Food Pantry distribute grab-and-go meals in the parking lot of the Episcopal Church of the Atonement in Westfield.



John Velis speaks with a Westfield Food Pantry client while wearing a mask and maintaining social distance.

Hills a few years ago.

Yet his job, too, makes campaigning difficult in the age of Covid-19. When the coronavirus state of emergency was declared, some towns shut down construction sites. Cain had to cut his payroll and pick up the slack himself.

"I had to dial back the campaign and get back to work," he said. "I don't have that cash flow now, and I'm worried. I had to get back in the driver's seat and take care of things here."

He said he's been dealing with the same economic worries as other district residents — "I have a family, I have a mortgage, I have kids out of school, I have a business with employees." The experience of the past six weeks, he said, underscores "how important it is that we keep the [Senate] seat fiscally responsible."

Velis said he hopes that as the election date comes closer, there will be less of a need for elected officials to help constituents access government help, and he'll have time to get back to campaigning. In the meantime, however, the reason he decided to run for Senate — to help people — is what's keeping him off

the campaign trail.

Cain said the government's coronavirus response has become "a very important part of this election," raising questions about how the economy will be rebuilt after infection rates diminish.

For more information about the Velis campaign, visit velis-forsenate.com.

For more about the Cain campaign, visit johncain4ma.com.

The May 19 election will be held in the 2nd Hampden and Hampshire Senate District, which includes all of Holyoke, along with nine other cities and towns stretching southwest to Tolland, and parts of Chicopee.

Voting will be offered in person, as usual, but during this state of emergency, voters will also be able to vote by mail without having to qualify for a religious, disability or travel-related exemption. To request a mailed ballot, fill out the form at [www.sec.state.ma.us/e/e/elepdf/2020-Special-State-Elections-Early-Ballot-Application.pdf](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/e/e/elepdf/2020-Special-State-Elections-Early-Ballot-Application.pdf) and return it to Registrar of Voters, City Hall, 536 Dwight St., Holyoke, MA 01040.

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## ARREST LOG

The Holyoke Police Department's arrest logs for April 6-19 were not available at press time.

## BUSINESS

Turley Publications is liberal with regard to its business coverage policies, but we do have some standards folks need to understand. First, local businesses and merchants are just as much institutions in our towns as the library and schools. Without them, there are no towns.

We will feature coverage of local businesses that are new, have a major expansion, moving, closing, under new management or ownership, celebrating a milestone anniversary, or have been thrust into the news realm. Merchants can request that coverage through the editor, or for our existing advertising clients, through their ad representatives.

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# Save the planet staying at home

Fifty years ago, the first observers of Earth Day took to the streets to rally for environmental causes and protest against pollution. In recent years, the annual April observance has become an occasion for nature lovers to band together to comb through forests and shorelines, picking up trash.

Today, neither kind of mass gathering is possible, but that doesn't mean Earth Day, which took place on Wednesday, should pass unremarked. In the era of social distancing advisories, there's plenty that Holyoke residents can do at home to celebrate the spirit of Earth Day.

- Clean up on your own. Though Massachusetts residents are barred from gathering in groups of more than 10, sidewalks and hiking trails are still open for a walk. Why not bring a trash bag along? It may not have the same impact as a whole crew fishing tires and mattresses out of the Connecticut River, but picking up "everyday" litter from city streets and nature paths is still a step in the right direction.

- Pledge to support environmental causes. The Earth Day Network website (earthday.org) lists several options, such as promising to eat less meat (raising animals takes more natural resources than raising plants), promising to avoid pesticides that hurt pollinators such as bees, promising to vote based on environmental concerns, and recruiting others to do the same.

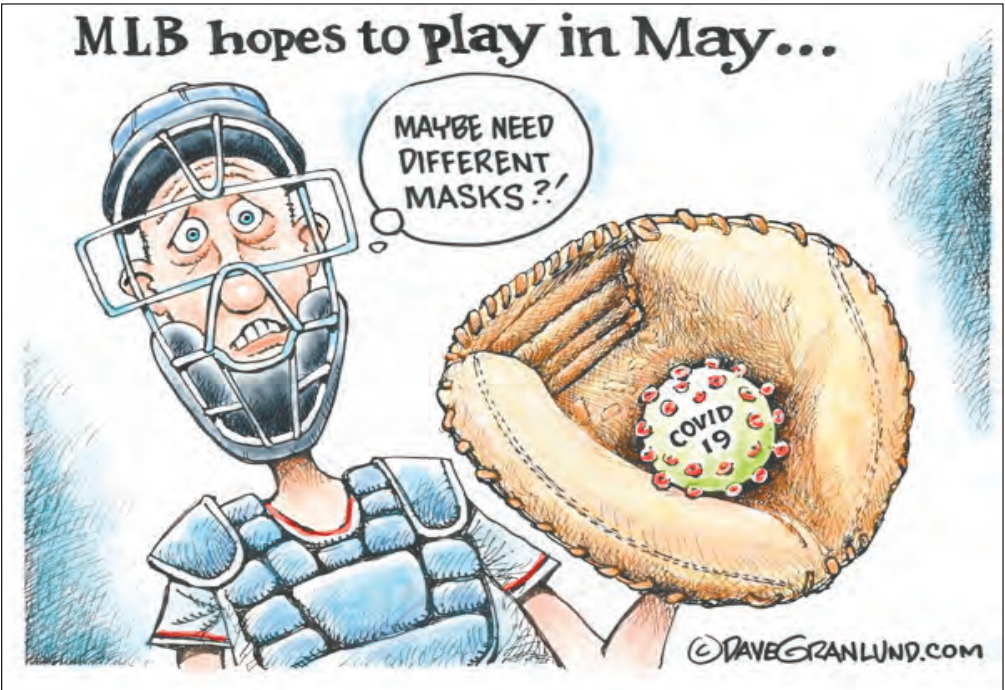
- Audit your trash. This one's a little messy, but put on some gloves and actually look through the family waste. Is there anything that can be recycled? Is there anything in the recycling cart that shouldn't be? Visit [springfieldmrf.org/whats-recyclable-at-the-mrf](http://springfieldmrf.org/whats-recyclable-at-the-mrf) for a list of what should, and what shouldn't, be recycled in Holyoke's curbside program.

- Camp (not too far) out. Campgrounds are closed, but anyone with a tent and a backyard can still enjoy the outdoors. Spend a night under the stars and reconnect with the Earth's creatures — the birds, the squirrels and yes, the bugs — while also appreciating the trees, the breeze and the spectacular night sky. It's easy to miss these treasures when "going out" means dashing straight from the back door to the car door.

- Start composting. Organic waste doesn't have to go in the landfill. Many homeowners dispose of their fiber and food waste the natural way, in a compost heap, or an indoor composting bin. Not only does it reduce household and yard waste, but it also yields nutrient-rich soil for the garden. Get started at [www.mass.gov/lists/home-composting-green-landscaping](http://www.mass.gov/lists/home-composting-green-landscaping).

- Green your home. The easiest way to save natural resources is not to waste them, so take some time this week to fix a leaky faucet,

See EDITORIAL, page 6



## POETRY CORNER

# Tolerate Tomorrow

By Thomas J. Kennedy

I don't like the word tolerate  
It's is symbiotic somewhere between like and hate.  
It is sort of pharisaical  
As it can hide with less than a smile.

Do you really know that person's handicaps —  
Take a look at yourself ... Enough said  
Someday your light in conscience may shine.  
You cannot deny something that exist.

J.F. Kennedy said: My boat so small; the ocean  
so big.  
Now why you see why others come first.  
His Spirit will always uplift

As the motives and intent ... Judge themselves.

Now, are you religious or spiritual.  
Maybe it's what you think  
If rationalizing ... Use spiritualized

Now go out and help people hurting, lonely in poverty depressed.  
Anxiety indeed brings on over stress.  
Now you, yes you — Go out and and give your best.

Too much suffering ... Too much suffering ...  
When will it end ...  
God grant Your children " Peace, Love and Joy."

# Greens you can grow now

With more time spent at home I am itching to get into the garden, but with temperatures below freezing at night and daytime just topping off in the forties last week what on earth can I possibly plant? Greens!

Spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*) is a cool weather crop. Seeds can be sown early, as soon as the ground can be worked. Germination can occur in soils as cold as 45 degrees. Don't worry about chilly morning temperatures hurting young seedlings; spinach will tolerate a light frost. Bolting, or seed-setting, occurs naturally as day lengths reach 14 to 16 hours of light per day.

When the plant begins to bolt more energy is spent on flowering and seed production than on leaf making. Leaves become smaller and are usually bitter in taste. I remove the plants

## IN THE GARDEN



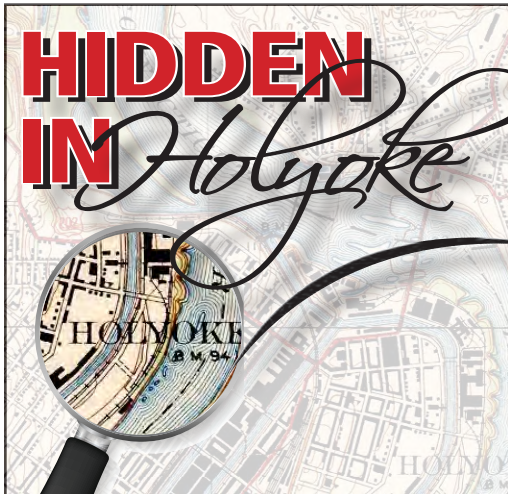
Roberta McQuaid  
Columnist

from the garden at this point and sow something else in their place. Many people have good luck planting spinach seeds again in July or August for a fall harvest. Still others sow seeds even later in the season, hoping that with a little protection the plants may overwinter and grow like gangbusters in the cool weather of the following spring.

I harvested my spinach (a variety advertised as "slow to bolt") only two or three times before it began to set seed. For just a couple of meals the effort was hardly worthwhile. Over the last few years, however, I have been experimenting with a variety of so-called spinach substitutes, and so far am delighted by their taste and durability.

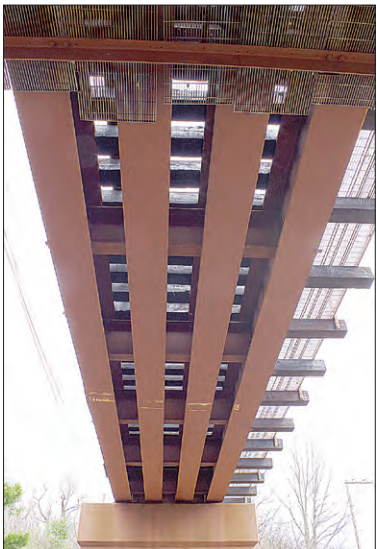
The first is New Zealand spinach (*Tetragonia*). Although its name may imply

See GARDEN, page 6



Each week, *The Holyoke Sun* will feature a photo of a distinctive place, landmark, sculpture, sign or other recognizable object located somewhere in the city.

Think you know what or where it is? Readers are encouraged to submit their guesses to "Hidden in Holyoke" via email to [TheSun@Turley.com](mailto:TheSun@Turley.com). In order to qualify for the weekly contest, entries must be received by Wednesday at noon for inclusion into Friday's edition. Please include your full name with your guess in an email to [TheSun@turley.com](mailto:TheSun@turley.com). If more than one correct answer is received, the names of all those who submitted guesses will be listed. For more information, contact *The Holyoke Sun* at 413-283-8398.



Last week's "Hidden in Holyoke" was the railroad bridge over Holyoke Street near the entrance to the Holyoke Mall. It was correctly guessed by John Mansfield, and Fred and Paul Wanat.

the **Sun**<sup>HOLYOKE</sup>

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# A Quote

OF NOTE

"A little competition is good, and it was a fun thing to do with the kids."

Mary Colon



# Letters to the Editor Policy

Letters to the Editor have a maximum of 350 words. We require writers to include their name, address and phone number in order for our office to authenticate authorship prior to publication. Addresses and phone numbers are not published.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions. Libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks or defamation of character are not allowed.

Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

Please email (preferred) letters to [thesun@turley.com](mailto:thesun@turley.com). Mailed letters can be sent to *The Sun*, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.



**SOLDIERS**, from page 1

show up, they didn’t have any reserves,” said Steve Connor, director of the Central Hampshire Veterans’ Services.

Alongside the families of tenants, Connor has advocated for more resources to be directed to the building, noting that staff was reduced in 2015. The building’s former superintendent, Paul Barabani, pushed hard to improve conditions before subsequently being pushed into retirement in December 2015, said Connor.

Others share a different narrative. From fiscal 2015 to 2020, the facility’s funding was increased by 14 percent and the average amount spent on each resident has increased by 11 percent during that time period, said Brooke Karanovich, representing the home as a spokeswoman for the state’s Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

It is also Karanovich’s understanding that employees who retired in 2015 were able to do so as part of the early retirement incentive program, a statewide program that wasn’t specific to the Soldiers’ Home.

“It was a statewide offer that was made to state employees who met certain criteria to be eligible. They could choose to retire early and get some sort of extra benefit,” said Karanovich.

In the meantime, Superintendent Bennett Walsh has come under fire since being placed on administrative leave effective March 30. His responsibilities have temporarily been assumed by Val Liptak, RN, the CEO of Western Massachusetts Hospital in Westfield.

Karanovich emphasized that additional disciplinary action against Walsh not yet been taken, and several investigations remain ongoing.

On April 1, Gov. Charlie Baker launched an investigation and Attorney General Maura Healey announced an investigation on April. A federal investigation was launched by U.S. Attorney Andrew Lelling on April 10.

Brian Willette, state commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, believes that Walsh has unfairly become the public face of the incident after inheriting a flawed operation.

“As far as I’m concerned, Bennett Walsh is the second superintendent in a row to ask for help from the state and not receive it,” said Willette.

Walsh maintained that he alerted the state after the first Soldiers’ Home resident tested positive on March 21, but Baker stated that he was not notified until well afterward, sparking the investigations.

Willette said he hasn’t seen enough evidence to blame Walsh. Willette and his peers have a personal connection to the facility; the Soldiers’ Home has served as a meeting ground for the Military Order of the Purple Heart since 2013, and a number of members reside in the home.

“At this very moment, there are several investigations going on. We need to see the results of those investigations. Simultaneously, the trustees are working to fire the current superintendent, I feel without due process,” said Willette.

Willette alleges that Soldiers’ Home trustees allegedly endeavored to fire Walsh, but a court-issued restraining order delayed the process until at least next month. Acknowledging the court action, Karanovich denies that the trustees attempted to execute Walsh’s termination.

Connor, on the other hand, is of the opinion that Walsh never should have been given the job to begin with. Connor, who is responsible for enrolling veterans in the home, recalls being immediately alarmed when Walsh assumed the position following Barabani’s departure.

“The reality was that he didn’t have any background in running a facility,” said Connor. “He was a proud Marine who served very honorably, but never ran a facility like this. He came in under those circumstances [of staffing reductions], which kind of made me worried. Over the couple of years that have fol-

lowed, staffing has continued to be an issue.”

Connor recently released a memo in 2017 to outline the “concerns of veterans, their family members and the staff of the Holyoke Soldiers’ Home and the members of the Western Massachusetts Veterans Service Officers Association.”

The document states that “the major concern that has been brought to our attention, is for the health and safety of the veterans who live there.” The memo highlights issues such as poor staffing, an ineffective governing structure and lackluster conditions inside of the facility.

Employee compensation has also been criticized. In 2017, the average staff salary at the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke was \$40,727, while employees at the Chelsea Soldiers’ Home averaged an annual salary of \$66,638.

The difference of more than \$25,000 is representative of the Holyoke facility’s lack of “skilled nurses,” according to the report, and this may have contributed to recent outbreak. Connors believes that many families have been afraid to voice complaints out of fear that the facility itself would be entirely shuttered.

“From everything that I’ve heard from the nurses and the families in there, it was already bad. Having this [outbreak] happen only amplified it,” said Connor. “It’s really been an ongoing problem; the staffing level, the morale and the staff having to work forced overtime.”

Prior to the outbreak, Connor met with a number of local and state legislators to discuss the issue. Willette too is adamant that there has been a history of understaffing and underfunding at the Soldiers’ Home.

“There’s a need for more assistance up there; there’s a need for more money, more staffing, better housing conditions, and they’ve known that,” said Willette. “From the veterans organizations’ perspective, this is what we fight for; staffing and funding. With staffing shortages, they cannot properly care for these veterans. Does that mean a bigger budget? Yes, it does,” he continued.

Last month, it took multiple days for the public to be informed that the first Soldiers’ Home residents had succumbed to Covid-19. Connor was in the building this week to complete a charitable endeavor; he explained what haunts him most about how the incident unfolded.

“While I was there, two veterans were given farewells, going out in the hearse. When they go out, all of the nurses and all of the staff [pay respects]. When it was unknown that veterans were dying that first weekend in March, I heard about it from friends and said, ‘Well, how would nobody know that?’ Then it came out that there was a refrigerator truck in the back of the building,” said Connor.

“Nothing could have done more to hurt the families and all the veterans to know that, because always they go out with honors, out the front door. They even play taps. It just was such a heart-breaking thing that they had gone out the back door and put in a refrigerator truck,” he continued.

Connor considers the building’s employees to be courageous and thanked them for their tireless effort and commitment to local veterans. He acknowledged that, like front line responders across the country, they have performed admirably amid dangerous circumstances.

It will take years for the Soldiers’ Home to fully rebound from the outbreak that has occurred within its walls. Connor noted that approximately 25 percent of its tenants are now dead.

He did voice optimism that the building will rise from the ashes and serve veterans for many more years to come.

“It’s always been the gem on the hill here for us in Western Mass.; it’s now not that, but it can be again, if people just pay attention and support it the way that it needs to be supported. There’s going to be a long time of recovery, and we need to keep an eye on it so this never happens again,” he said.

**Women to Watch nominations due soon**

The Western Massachusetts chapter of Women to Watch USA is taking nominations for the annual Top 25 Women Watch in Western Massachusetts through April 30. Nominations are open to the public and available at [www.women-2watchusawestma.com](http://www.women-2watchusawestma.com).

The public voting for the nominees will take place May 1-31. There are 23 categories available where people can

nominate their favorite businesswoman who has made a difference not only in her business but also in her community.

Winners will be announced in June and the awards dinner will take place Oct. 22 at the Log Cabin in Holyoke.

For more information or to join the chapter, visit [www.women2watchusawestma.com](http://www.women2watchusawestma.com).

**EDITORIAL**, from page 4

caulk a drafty window, convert water fixtures to low-flow models or install a programmable thermostat.

- Involve the family. Make an Earth Day “lesson” part of this week’s activities for children who are home from school. There are resources all over the Internet for children to learn about threatened ani-

mals and their habitats, nature in their backyards, recycling and conservation, and even simple science experiments.

This Earth Day, all the public health authorities are telling us not to go out into the world. But there’s still plenty we can do on our own to care for our world.

*What do you think? Send your letter to the editor to [thesun@turley.com](mailto:thesun@turley.com).*

**SCHOOL**, from page 1

closing in March due to Covid-19, Zrike said students and teachers were advised to take their belongings with them on the chance they did not return to school. The district will be working with the state and health officials to determine if it will be possible to allow anyone who needs something from the building to retrieve it.

“We have also allowed teachers to come back in the last few weeks, with social distancing and proper protective equipment, to retrieve items that were of high need,” Zrike said. “I’m sure there’s other items that, prior to the summer, that students and teachers may need. My hope is that with direction from the state level and from medical professionals or health professionals that we’d be able to provide an opportunity for people to do that when it’s safe to do so.”

As part of the remote learning curriculum, more than 1,300 Chromebook laptop computers were sent home with students. Each Chromebook has been signed out by the family, so the district knows who has what. Zrike said the Chromebooks will be collected when the students return to the school next fall.

School employees over 20 hours a week are being paid per usual and are working, whether it’s serving food or cleaning the buildings or teaching remotely. For employees who worked under 20 hours per week during a normal school year, Zrike said those who can do their work remotely will get paid.

“So, a lot of folks are tutoring and they’re still able to tutor their students, then we pay them for their time,” he said. “If they’re able to provide the function that they normally do, then we will pay them for their time.”

The school breakfast and lunch programs will continue though the end of the school year. Zrike said that the annual summer meals program is expected to run as usual.

**Summer and fall**

The start of the 2020-21 school year presents several challenges. As state direction is to not teach any new material during the remote learning period, students will need to start next year by covering previous-grade-level concepts that weren’t covered in the spring.

“That’s one thing we’re actively talking about right now,” Zrike said. “We’re going to have to adjust what we teach, the pace at which we have to teach it, how time is spent on instruction to cover the gaps students have missed from the prior year’s learning. That’s absolutely something school districts have to work on now

and over the summer.”

While middle school students were able to complete their tour of the high school before the schools closed, kids moving to schools at the lower levels that have missed out on orientations, meet-and-greets, and get-to-know-your-teacher events.

“Those are definitely things we’re going to have to think about how to do, maybe in the summer,” Zrike said.

Zrike said while the indications from the state are that schools will be able to open in the fall, the district is planning for both in-person and remote learning for summer school. Zrike said if the school’s open, he expects it will be with some variations.

“We don’t know if we’re going to be allowed into school for the summer at all. We are planning for both virtual summer school and in-person. What we don’t know is what in-person could look like,” Zrike said. “I think that what we are talking about is whether there’s guidance and restrictions around how schools function in the fall when we return, in terms of how many people can be in the room together, what happens if someone comes down with a fever, are we practicing social distancing, are we wearing the proper protective equipment?”

For preschool and kindergarten enrollment, a new virtual registration system is being implemented in the next two to three weeks. Zrike said it’s something the district has never done before, but has wanted to put in place. Screening for families can be conducted over the summer or even after the school year starts, since kindergarten doesn’t start on the first day of school.

“It’s good to have anyway, whether we’re in a pandemic or not,” Zrike said.

If school doors open in the fall, it will be an adjustment period for teachers and students. Zrike pointed out students are normally accustomed to having a few months off during the summer, but will have been outside the classroom for more than six months by the time the start of school in the fall comes.

“We’re going to have to really spend some time with kids getting acclimated back to school and the transition to school,” Zrike said. “We’ve got to consider a different look into what the transition back to the way we do school is. The routines, the rituals, and allowing for building relationships and connections and re-connections with one another, I think that has to feature prominently in the return to school.”

Families who have questions or want more information can contact the school at its hotline, open Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 413-561-0862 for English and 413-314-3560 for Spanish, or visit [www.hps.holyoke.ma.us](http://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us).



VIDEO, from page 1

contest was able to encourage our residents to do three things, stay home, support local businesses, and engage in community pride.” Morse said. “People have been very cooperative and supportive of the idea over the last week. I know people have been anxious and careful, so I wanted to spark some positivity.”

He said he was impressed with how the community could come together and connect virtually during this isolated time. The April 10 prompt will not be the last, Morse said, as another round of the contest is already in the works.

That first contest prompt asked contestants to show how they were keeping busy at home, but the next one is to show off a talent.

“I knew that it would take a couple weeks to get this project off the ground, we had a good amount of entries [the first] week, but I think we’ll get more now that winners have been announced,” Morse said. “We have a few ideas for the upcoming weeks, and we’re hoping we can carry on with this through the shutdown.”

More people are spreading the word, sharing videos, and telling their friends and families about the contest, and as more people spread the word the better the community connectivity will be, Morse said.

The first week’s winners were announced on April 14, on Morse’s Facebook page, where he has also been giving regular coronavirus and state-

of-the-city updates from his office. The Mayor’s Choice winners were Jeannette Pamaylaon and her grandson Gavin Clark, who recreated famous paintings and made a slideshow.

“We actually started the project a bit before quarantine and continued it for fun. We like going to art museums often, and now we can’t go to any, so we decided to make our own,” Pamaylaon said. “We do homeschooling, so this was partially educational and partially fun, a good art lesson at home.”

Clark got creative and used props from around the house in order reenact and recreate famous paintings, like the “Girl with a Pearl Earring” by Johannes Vermeer. Clark used household items like a blanket and different towels, along with a golf ball, to recreate the iconic painting. It was enough to impress the mayor.

“I watched all the videos with my team, but the decision was my own, I chose Jeannette and her grandson because I thought it was the most creative idea and I enjoyed watching it,” Morse said.

Pamaylaon explained that they entered after being encouraged by a friend, and it was a fun experience. Although they are not sure if they will enter the next round, the next winners probably will.

The People’s Choice-winning video was submitted by the Colón family, which created a “how-to” video on making tie-dye shirts and using those shirts to make face masks.



The Colón family, whose video about making face masks won the People’s Choice Award in the Holyoke at Home contest: from left, Ethan, Jaden, Juan, Keileann and Mary Colón. Submitted photos



Gavin Clark, 11, recreates the Vermeer painting “The Girl with a Pearl Earring” as part of his art-themed video that won the Mayor’s Choice Award.



From left, Jeannette Pamaylaon and grandson Gavin Clark used their love of art to win the Mayor’s Choice Award.

“We showed the process of tie-dyeing the shirts with the kids 6 feet apart, and then we showed the final product of the face masks,” said Mary Colón, the mother of three. “It was really fun just doing the project and making the video, then entering the contest was something to keep busy and look forward to. A little competition is good, and it was a fun thing to do with the kids, and we’ll probably do it again.”

Mary admitted that she and her husband Juan try not to take the kids out when running errands to minimize their potential exposure to the coronavirus,

though the three kids do wear the masks around the house for fun.

“It was really fun, and my oldest son helped out a lot, he more technically savvy and he helped to put it all together,” Mary Colón said. “It was a great bonding opportunity, and it gave us something to do for a while.”

This was one of the goals of the video contest, to strengthen bonds between the community and at home. Things can get stressful as the shutdown continues, but there are always new ideas to pass the time. For inspiration during this time, people can check out the submitted videos and try out new things.

While the mayor didn’t submit a video the first week, he said he might partake in the next contest.

“I didn’t enter a video, but maybe I will next week, I’m not sure,” Morse said. “Of course, I wouldn’t be eligible to win, but it might be fun just to submit a video, so we’ll see.”

For updates on the contest and its next round, visit facebook.com/alexbmorse. Videos can be uploaded to holyokeathome.com or by using the hashtag #HolyokeAtHome on social media.

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# SPORTS

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## Prospects of spring season looking bleak

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

As the state celebrates Patriots Day along with the spring vacation week where many spring teams would normally be playing baseball and lacrosse games at 11 a.m. and 12 noon rather than the tradition 4 p.m. starts, there is nothing happening on any fields this week.

The MIAA's Board of Directors, in conjunction with guidance and recommendations made by the Tournament Management Committee, head into a crucial week seeking to start the spring season on May 4.

However, that start date is contingent on Gov. Charlie Baker starting the process of "opening the state back up."

Unfortunately, with time waning, and guidance from the federal government, it does not appear as though Massachusetts will be opening up, specifically for classes, on May 4. No school means no spring sports for athletes across the state.

Massachusetts is not among the nearly 30 states in the nation that has shut down school for the remainder of the academic year. Baker has said he does not want to shut schools down for the remainder of the year and was hopefully to get students back into the classroom even for a short period of time.

However, the MIAA's current plan for a 12-game slate and sectional playoff run is contingent on schools being re-opened on May 4. Another delay, which would likely be a minimum of two weeks in length, would be catastrophic to the plan.

"We (the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference) came up with a modified schedule for the shortened season," said Agawam High School Athletic Director David Stratton, a member of the PVIAC Board of Directors. "But it could up being a futile exercise."

Time is running low, but Baker has yet to make a call on whether or not the stay-at-home advisory, non-essential businesses being closed, and schools being shuttered will remain in effect.

The last meeting of the MIAA Board of Directors was held by teleconference on Thursday, April 16. At the meeting, the

See SPRING, page 8

## Pioneers will not play 2020 regular season

The GM of the team hopes there will be some exhibitions and an Open Cup this year

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

LUDLOW – It was an unprecedented season for the Western Mass. Pioneers in the 2019 season. The team made it all the way to conference semifinals last year before suffering their first defeat of the season.



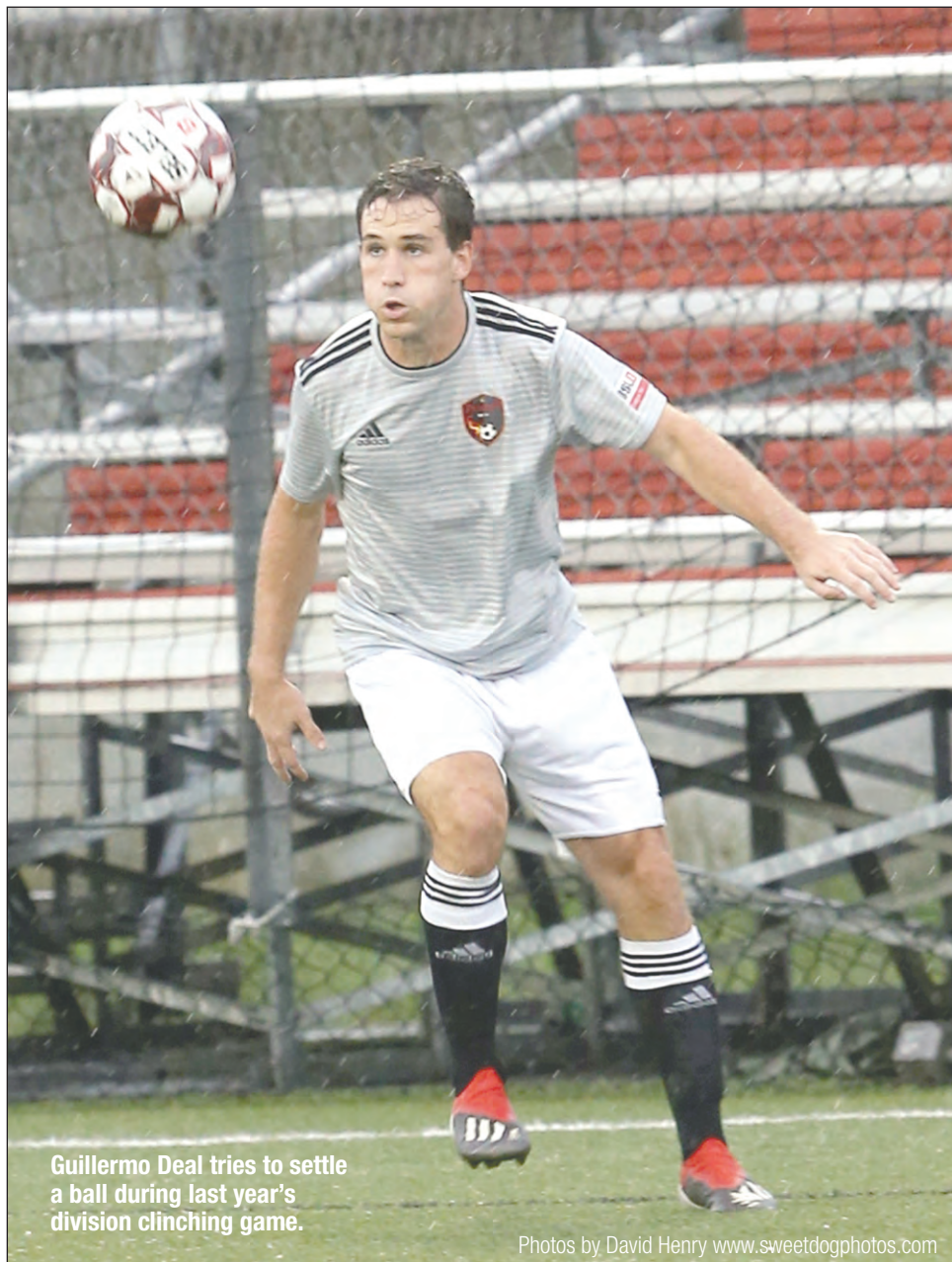
Ben Brewster starts a move up the field. The Pioneers will not play in the 2020 regular season



Micah Umeh sends a shot away.

follow up on what they accomplished last season.

"Yeah, definitely crazy and unprecedented times," said Kolodziey. "We were



Guillermo Deal tries to settle a ball during last year's division clinching game.

Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

extremely excited about this season. We had a good group of players returning from last year's team along with some excellent new recruits. We had qualified for the U.S. Open Cup, and were looking forward to some fun and exciting games at the stadium this summer. So on that note it's a bit disheartening."

Kolodziey said he is hopeful the team will get the opportunity to play some games this season. He is hoping to see the Open Cup be rescheduled and possibly have some exhibition matches later this year.

"But obviously some things are out of

your control," he said. "But as of this week, the US Open Cup has not made a decision as to what they are doing with their tournament, so there is a chance we could be playing if they choose to go ahead with it."

"Other than that, we will monitor the health situation in the coming weeks and try to provide our great fans with some action at the stadium when and if we can. We are hoping to schedule exhibition games and for the young soccer players in the area, put together our summer soccer camp pro-

See PIONEERS, page 8

## Blue Sox looking to start regular season on time

The Valley Blue Sox were champions of the New England Collegiate Baseball League in 2017 and 2018. They made it to the semifinals in last year's playoffs.

Now, more than ever, college athletes will be looking at leagues like the NECBL to make their mark for their colleges and prospective baseball scouts. The NECBL released a statement recently regarding the status of the 2020 season, currently set to open in up early June:

We continue to closely monitor the rapidly changing situa-

tion involving the outbreak of COVID-19 and its impact on our 2020 summer season.

We are hopeful that we will play baseball this summer, and we continue to plan for our summer season, including accommodating college seniors who are now eligible to play and what our season may look like. That said, our first priority is the health and well-being of our players, host families and fans. As part of our monitoring we are communicating with MLB, the NCAA and the National Alliance of Collegiate Summer

Baseball. We will regularly review decisions and guidance from federal, state and local officials, and the leadership of our host communities to obtain the most current information on the virus, and to understand and implement the most current recommendations and directives.

As we assess this changing situation, foremost we recognize that college athletes lost their spring season, and because of this, summer baseball is more important to our players and coaches than ever before. That's why – even in the context of to-

day - we will continue to plan for summer ball and make every extra effort to get our college players on the field. Our season may not look the same, but our role in player development has never been more important. And to our dedicated fans and sponsors, your support has never been more important. We appreciate your long and steadfast support and are hopeful to see you again this summer at the ballpark.

As we make decisions about our summer season, we will keep you fully informed.



# Retiring pastor reflects on 40-year ministry

By **Shelby Macri**  
smacri@turley.com

Like all Holyoke faith leaders, the Rev. Phil Gustafson has been through unprecedented changes during the coronavirus state of emergency over the past month.

Now he's undergoing a different change, getting ready to retire at the end of this month, after five years as the pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran Church and more than 40 years of ministry.

Gustafson has been finding innovative ways to hold services and connect with church members in the era of social distancing. He has employed virtual worships including Zoom meetings, audio clips on the website, YouTube.com uploads, and even low-watt FM radio transmitters that allowed him to hold Palm Sunday and Easter services in the church parking lot. He has also been available by phone and email for those who need guidance, someone to talk to, or for any reason that requires reaching out, he encourages people to contact him if they need to.

Gustafson received his master of divinity degree from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia in 1979, the same year we was ordained in the Lutheran Church in America, in New York (following a merger, the denomination became known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1988).

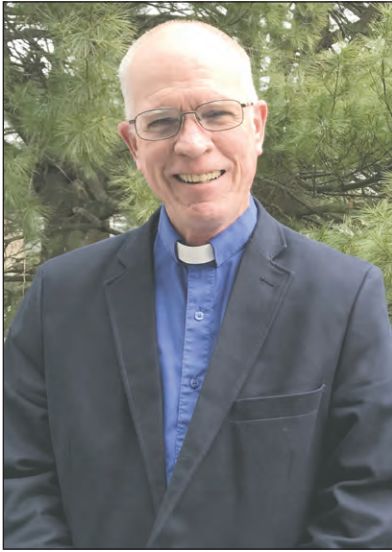
He has worked at many different churches and in many different positions. Even though the coronavirus shutdown is an unprecedented bump in the road, Gustafson could offer experience and the passion to keep his congregation together.

"As a pastor, I do a lot of visits with people, and I'm in the community a lot," he said. "Not being able to see people and speak with them in a close way has been hard. It's hurting me that I'm unable to be with my members during this time, but I'm trying to find ways to connect and be accessible to my people."

He's been able to connect with people in many different places during a 40-year ministry that has taken him north and west from his original Pennsylvania home.

"I had always known that I either wanted to be a test pilot for the Air Force or a pastor, and when I visited my pastor at church, I knew it was something I wanted to do," Gustafson said. "It felt like a life calling to connect people to hope, love, and faith, and I'm always going to do that."

His first call to help people was in 1979 at the House of Mercy Lutheran Church and the St. John's of Lovi Lutheran Church, both in Pennsylvania. He was the pastor at both churches and stayed with both from 1979 to 1982, when he moved



After serving St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Holyoke for five years, Pastor Phil Gustafson will be retiring at the end of April. Submitted photo

to the St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pennsylvania. He stayed there until 1986. He then moved to Massachusetts and served as assistant pastor at Zion's Evangelical Lutheran Church from 1986 to 1987, and was appointed as interim pastor in 1988.

"The first time I went down to Massachusetts is because my wife Sandy is from there and she wanted to go back," Gustafson said. "I go wherever she goes, so we moved to Massachusetts and I was able to continue my work in Pittsfield."

Though he settled in Massachusetts for three years, Gustafson was not doing traveling. From 1988 to 1993 Gustafson served as the pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Brattleboro, Vt., and when they asked him to be the pastor developer at another location, he accepted and was moved to Missouri. He served as the pastor developer at the Christ Lutheran Church from 1993 to 1995, then became the pastor of family from 1995 to 2003. Gustafson explains that he did as much as he could there, and then returned to Pennsylvania to be around his family.

That won't be the last time he moves somewhere to be closer to family, as he and his wife are moving to Arizona to be closer to their son out there.

"I'm really looking forward to spending more time with my wife and my family once we move. I'm also looking forward to playing golf and maybe some fishing, we'll see what happens," Gustafson said. "I'll still be able to keep up my studies and religion. I'll be adjusting to retirement, but I won't be a couch potato."

Gustafson and his wife Sandy will be moving to Arizona in the beginning of May, and while he's looking forward to being with family, he's already anticipating connecting with local churches. He explains that

he's looking forward to being a part of the congregation and looking to the church rather than having the church look to him.

"I'm ready to start the next phase and it's not so much of a retirement, but a realignment for me," Gustafson said.

While he said he might occasionally preach in churches that allow him to, his last service as pastor will be at St. Peter's. Gustafson explained that it takes a lot of work to prepare for services, and he's looking forward to being able to study how and what he wants. While he's still in Holyoke, Gustafson is working on his online services and meetings to provide the service he can in his last few weeks.

"There are congregations out there that are concerned about what they can do for themselves, and although St. Peter's is a fairly new or young congregation, they're very interested in reaching out to the community," Gustafson said. "St. Peter's is interested in where they've been and where they're going, they have a diverse attitude of things but they have the same core teachings."

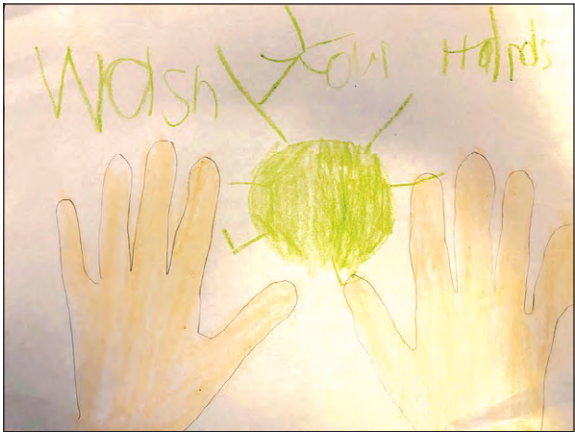
Gustafson explained that St. Peter's Lutheran Church has many different people and different cultures that attend the church, but the congregation doesn't see these differences as a source of division, but rather as a way of being diverse and a way of being stronger.

Although his last month in Holyoke has been one of social distancing and a cancelled farewell party, Gustafson assures people that he will find a way to say goodbye to everyone. He also believes that this shutdown will help people connect and come together, and people will realize the things they've taken for granted, such as human connection.

Connecting to people is a familiar area for Gustafson, as he served three congregations in Pennsylvania from 2003 to 2014, before coming to Holyoke. As the pastor of New Hope Lutheran Ministries, St. Paul's and Reformation Lutheran churches, and St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Highfield, he connected with multiple communities and was able to help many people along the way.

"Visiting people, being in touch with them and helping them with their journey, I've missed that the most during this shutdown," Gustafson said. "Having that connection with people will be the hardest to let go, but it's important to remember that God is always with you and there is always a creative way to solve problems."

This is something that he's keeping in mind during shutdown and it can be applied to most aspects of life, he's keeping communication line open because he knows how important it is to talk to someone.



## HEALTHY MESSAGE

Joshua Stark Jr., a first-grader at Metcalf School, shared this public health reminder. The Holyoke Sun welcomes students to share their artwork with the community during the coronavirus state of emergency. Images can be emailed to [thesun@turley.com](mailto:thesun@turley.com). Submitted photo

## SPRING, from page 7

board voted on some simple items, stating that in a cost-saving measure, tournament semifinal games would be held at the site of the higher seed. Semifinals and finals are normally held on neutral turf.

However, in the case of baseball and softball, UMass and Western New England University have been that neutral turf. College campuses have remained closed, and it is very possible colleges may not want events at their fields. Some colleges have even talked about continuing distance learning until a vaccine is found for the coronavirus.

While it was not a formal vote, the minutes of the meeting note that more than 20 states had officially called off spring sports, specifically. But the MIAA will follow the guidance and expectations made by Gov. Baker.

The next meeting of the MIAA Board of Directors is set for May 5. However, a special meeting could be scheduled sooner if and when Baker makes a decision about the remainder of the school year.

## PIONEERS, from page 7

gram."

The league released a statement last Wednesday addressing the 2020 season:

These are unprecedented times as the world faces a challenging COVID-19 health crisis. And while the issues at hand are about much more than sport, as supporters of our clubs we want to share with you our appreciation for the patience you have shown as we worked closely with league officials as well as local, state, and national health authorities to understand the impact of this global pandemic on our upcoming season.

After careful thought and consideration, it was determined that the challenges of our division being spread over multiple states, coupled with the existing health crises, were too great of a risk to our long-term sustainability, and we have therefore made the difficult decision to forego our participation in the 2020 USL League Two season.

"We absolutely support the Northeast Division's decision," said USL Vice President Joel Nash. "At the end of the day, it was about much more than soccer and we look forward to welcoming them back even stronger in 2021."

Every member club in the Northeast has worked tirelessly to provide the highest level of soccer possible to all of our communities in thrilling, family-friendly environments, each with their own local flavor. However, given the fluidity of the situation and the uncertainty presented to us, we felt the decision was necessary for the greater good of all involved. While we are bitterly disappointed about this turn of events, especially for the fans, players, and our supportive Northeast communities, we also vow to come back better than ever in 2021.

In the meantime, all six Northeast Division clubs encourage everyone within our respective communities to be kind to one another, to look after those in need, and to encourage social distancing as much as possible. As clubs, we will continue to stay active and engaged in our communities off the pitch, and welcome any and all support in those endeavors. Only together can we get through these trying times and come out stronger for it. We will get through this together.

# Writer's commissions to raise funds for PPE

In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, Kellie Welch of Holyoke has found that writing is a way to help.

Welch has taken pen to paper for a project she founded called Write Aid. Her mission is to write for people in return for donations to GetUsPPE.org, a new website founded by a group of medical professionals on the frontlines of the fight against Covid-19.

GetUsPPE coordinates donations of needed masks, gloves and gowns to hospitals and healthcare professionals.

Since the launch of Write Aid on her Instagram page, @welchkell, Welch has written sonnets about dogs and cats, poetry about sourdough and

happiness, a fictional Twitter thread, and a play about birds. Requests have come from friends locally, as well as from Boston, New York City, and Texas. In less than two weeks, her words have resulted in \$300 in donations to GetUsPPE.org.

Welch wrote on her Instagram page, "Words are my reliable outlet and really all I have to offer while at home, but even they have felt empty lately. Let's work together to raise money and use storytelling to uplift each other. I will write you anything — a letter to a friend, a sonnet about your labradoodle, a eulogy for someone you've lost, a Dear John Letter to that person you were sort of seeing before this happened. The sky's the

limit. Tell your friends! The more random things I write, the more money we raise. #getusppe."

After having lived in New York City for nearly 10 years, Welch moved back to Western Massachusetts last fall. She is a graduate of Columbia University's School of General Studies, where she studied anthropology and was part of the university's Honor Society. She is a singer and songwriter whose lyrics have won awards in international songwriting competitions, including American Songwriter and Songdoor International.

She currently works as a writer for an educational nonprofit organization.



# horoscopes

# WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to poetry.

**E T E M H**

*Answer: Theme*

## Guess Who?

---

I am a professional wrestler and actor born in Massachusetts on April 23, 1977. I worked as a chauffeur while pursuing a career in bodybuilding. Although I'm not really a doctor, a previous nickname suggested I was.

*Answer: John Cena*

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| 3 | 8 |   |   |   | 7 |   |   |   |
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Happy spring

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
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| 2 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 |  |
| 9 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 8 |  |
| 7 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 6 |  |
| 5 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 1 | 8 | 3 |  |
| 8 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 5 |  |
| 3 | 9 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 4 |  |

ANSWERS WILL BE IN NEXT WEEKS PAPERS



otherwise, this is not a true spinach. Fresh cut it doesn't taste or look like spinach either, but when cooked it will fill in for Popeye's favorite with no questions asked. The beauty of this sprawling plant is in its productivity; just a few plants will produce enough leaves to feed an entire family. Hard, nut-like seeds may take awhile to germinate. I have found that soaking them in warm water for a few

Swiss chard is one of my favorite greens; it's not exactly

like spinach but it can be used similarly. So far I have made two sowings. I tried one extra early, on April 6, and another just today. The first sowing hasn't sprouted yet, and I am curious if the seeds will sit until the weather warms and then I'll have two crops exactly the same time or if one will take the lead. You can either cut the leaves when tiny for use in salads or thin the plants and let the leaves grow large where they can be cooked up in a quick stir

We may not be able to plant our tomatoes or peppers yet, but we can certainly get our hands dirty by planting some spinach,

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to [ekennedy@turley.com](mailto:ekennedy@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*



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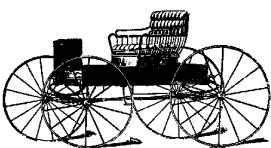
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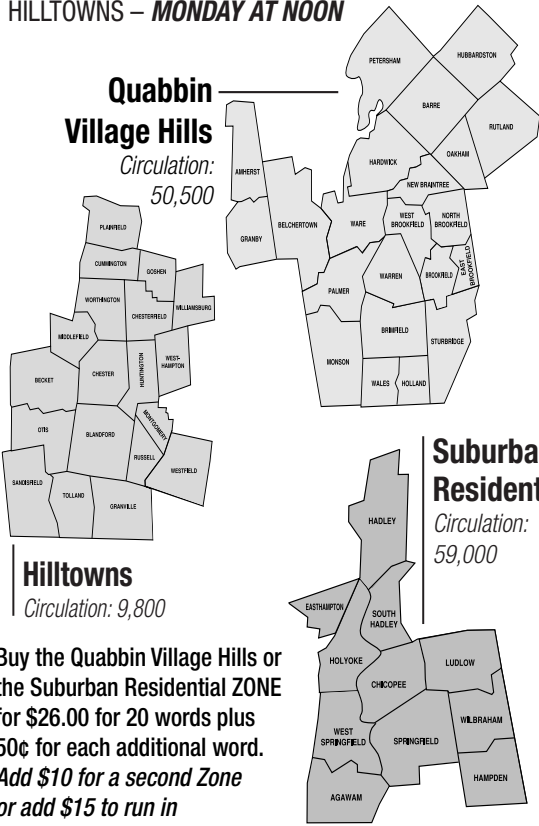
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## NOTICE

The Massachusetts State Lottery Commission (MSLC) will offer a KENO monitor to display the game to duly qualified existing KENO To Go Agent(s), as listed below:

**City Corner Convenience**  
579 Dwight Street  
Holyoke, MA, 01040

Written objection hereto, by Local Licensing Authority, must be received by: Gregory Polin, General Counsel, Massachusetts State Lottery Commission (MSLC), 150 Mount Vernon Street, Dorchester, MA 02150 - 3573 4/24/2020

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**The Trial Court**  
**Probate and Family Court**  
**Hampden Division**  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-8600  
Docket No. HD20P0648EA  
Estate of:  
**ROSEMARY BRODERICK O'CONNOR**  
Also Known As:  
**ROSEMARY B. O'CONNOR**  
Date of Death:  
February 22, 2020  
**INFORMAL PROBATE**

## PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner

**ANNE CASELLA** of HOLYOKE, MA a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

**ANNE CASELLA** of HOLYOKE, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform

Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure.

A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner. 4/24/2020

**City of Holyoke**  
536 Dwight Street #15  
Holyoke, MA 01040-5078  
(413)-322-5650  
Invitation to Bid 2020-008  
Traffic Signal Improvements

The City of Holyoke is seeking sealed bids for traffic signal improvements at the intersection of Westfield Road and Apremont Highway. Bids will be received by the

Chief Procurement Officer, Room 15, Holyoke City Hall, Holyoke, MA 01040 until **2:00 PM on May 21, 2020** at which time bids will be publicly opened and read.

Documents are available electronically by emailing: sheridanb@holyoke.org. and or belangerl@holyoke.org.

The City of Holyoke reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids. 4/24/2020



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# PUBLIC NOTICES

## ARE NOW ONLINE

1 Email all notices to  
notices@turley.com

2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.

3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

**visit www.publicnotices.turley.com**







Gates were open — and no entrance fee was being charged — at Mount Tom State Reservation on Reservation Road in Holyoke on Wednesday afternoon. Photos by Michael Ballway



The visitor center at Mount Tom State Reservation remains closed, like most public buildings, during the coronavirus pandemic.



Caution tape prevents access to the lookout tower at Mount Tom State Reservation.

The playground at Mount Tom is roped off as a public health measure, as is the nearby pavilion.

# Mount Tom still open for passive rec

State-owned recreational facilities like Mount Tom State Reservation are still open despite the governor's stay-at-home advisory, but not all services are available. Starting last week, in an

effort to discourage large crowds from gathering, the Department of Conservation and Recreation said it would take several measures to reduce parking capacity at facilities around the state. At many parks, this meant closing the front gates and allowing walk-in traffic only. At Mount Tom, however, the gates were still open on

We thought we would give you a quick update. First, we are happy to re-introduce weekly sales. We are cautiously optimistic that the market will slowly return back to its pre-Corona days. Until then our frozen items are proving to be the best value. We encourage you to give these items a try!

Second, we have posted throughout the store, on our website and on Facebook our health and safety rules. We kindly ask that you adhere to these in order to protect our customers and hard working staff. If you don't have access to or forgot your gloves no worries here! We are providing a pair of free gloves to each shopper as they enter the store. We are all in this together! Be well and stay safe!

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USDA INSP. FROZEN BONE-IN CENTER CUT PORK CHOPS..

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USDA INSP. SMOKED PORK SHOULDER PICNIC.....

\$1<sup>44</sup> lb

USDA INSP. SLICED IN OUR DELI TURKEY BREAST .....

\$3<sup>99</sup> lb

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\$1<sup>69</sup> lb

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\$1<sup>99</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FROZEN BEEF FEET.....

\$1<sup>99</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF RIBEYE

CUT FREE \$6<sup>96</sup> lb

WHOLE OR HALF

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF SHOULDER LONDON BROIL STEAKS

\$3<sup>93</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF TOP SIRLOIN SPOON ROAST or STEAKS

\$4<sup>44</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FROZEN BONE-IN SPLIT CHICKEN BREAST .....

TRAY PAK 79¢ lb

USDA INSP. FROZEN ROASTER CHICKEN .....

69¢ lb

USDA INSP. FROZEN CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS.....

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Thurs. 8-6 • Fri. 8-6 • Sat. 8-3

The closure sign on the park's Lake Bray service building has been updated several times as the governor has extended the coronavirus state of emergency, currently in effect until at least May 4.

Wednesday, both at Route 141 and Reservation Road off Route 5. Almost all parking areas were unblocked, and several people were hiking, walking dogs or enjoying views of Lake Bray, all while practicing social distancing from strangers.

DCR is asking that park users not congregate in groups of more than 10. If an area of the park is crowded, visitors should return another time.

Park users are asked to limit their visits to short periods of time and only participate in mobile activities such as walking, jogging and biking. Those who are ill, over 70 years old, or part of a vulnerable population should not visit the park.

Last month, at the start of the coronavirus state of emergency, DCR closed all state park visitor centers, playgrounds, athletic facilities, fitness areas, campgrounds and bathrooms. These closures remain in effect.

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## NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

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